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Duxbury Clipper

# Ospreys Band Together

By MORAG MACLACHLAN

Ten years after being taken off the endangered species list, ospreys are alive and well in Duxbury. Last Tuesday, conservation administrator Joe Grady took a group out to the osprey nests to band the birds.

Grady was joined by Massachusetts Audubon director David Clapp, Norman Smith, director of the Blue Hills Trail Site Museum, and Town Manager Rocco Longo.

Grady, Clapp, Smith, and Longo visited the two poles located in Duxbury- one called the Town Line Pole and the other located on Scat Island.

Although residents reported seeing baby ospreys on the Town Line pole, Smith climbed the ladder to the top of the pole and peered into the nest finding nothing.

"If the residents were right and there were baby ospreys, they may have been killed by a Great Horned Owl," Clapp said.

The Town Line Pole on the Marshfield border is located near trees home to the owl.

The three had better luck with the pole on Scat Island. Smith successfully banded one baby osprey.

According to Clapp, 30 years ago the osprey population was decreasing.

"It was found that DDT and DDE, common pesticides, were

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Town Manager Rocco Longo watches as Norman Smith, director of the Blue Hills Trail Site Museum, bands a baby osprey on Scat Island.

## Osprey Banding in Town

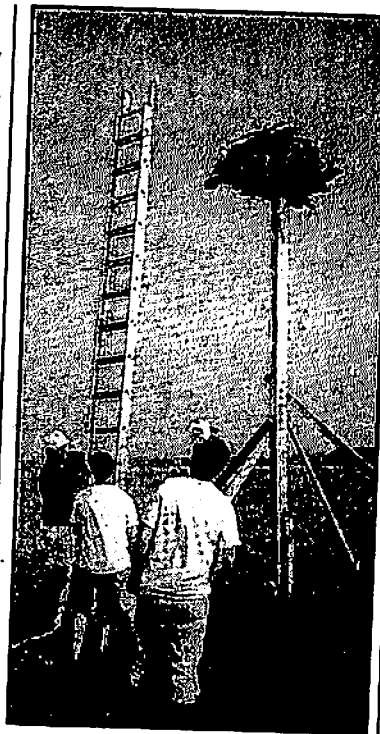
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effecting the bird's ability to lay eggs with solid shells," said Clapp. "DDT was then deemed an environmental poison and is not allowed to be used."

Ospreys usually have a white head and a dark colored eyeline and crown. They are a fish-eating hawk with white plumage that is dark on the back and white below. Some ospreys have a necklace of dark breast streaks. Their wing span is about five feet four inches. Baby ospreys become adult size in eight to nine weeks.

Ospreys usually nest in dead trees, but the poles that have been placed for them also provide a good habitat.

Since the ospreys have come off the endangered species list, the state no longer bands them. The banding process is now in the hands of people like Grady, Clapp, and Smith.



Massachusetts Audubon director David Clapp and Conservation Administrator Joe Grady set up the ladder for Norman Smith to check the nest for baby ospreys.